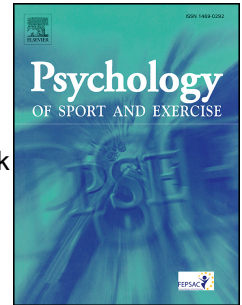# Accepted Manuscript

Empowering youth sport and acculturation: Examining the hosts' perspective in Greek adolescents

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1 **Empowering youth sport and acculturation: Examining the hosts' perspective in**
2 **Greek adolescents**

1   **Abstract**

2   Objectives: Research on the role of sport as a context for the acculturation of young

3   migrants has mainly focused on migrant populations. Considering that acculturation is

4   a two-way process involving both the migrant and the host populations, research

5   investigating the perspective of the hosts will enhance our understanding of the

6   acculturation process. The purpose of the present study was to explore acculturation

7   attitudes and perceptions of adolescents from the host population as a function of

8   sport participation. Furthermore, for those adolescents participating in sport, the role

9   of the sport motivational climate and its relation to acculturation attitudes was

10   investigated.

11   Design and Method: A cross-sectional quantitative design was adopted. Participants

12   were 626 (316 girls) Greek, high school students (13.88±1.01 years of age). Among

13   them, 271 (92 girls) were athletes competing in individual and team sports. While all

14   participants completed measures of acculturation attitudes, the athletes additionally

15   completed measures of motivational climate, basic need satisfaction, and controlling

16   coaching behavior.

17   Results: Athletes scored higher than non-athletes on attitudes towards multicultural

18   contact. Analysis of structural models revealed that a motivational climate

19   characterized by a mastery climate, supportive of the needs of autonomy, competence,

20   and relatedness, was positively linked to attitudes favoring migrants' maintenance of

21   their culture and development of interaction with the host culture, whereas a

22   motivational climate characterized by a performance climate and controlling coaching

23   behavior was negatively linked to such attitudes.

1   Conclusion: These findings provide useful insights concerning the perspectives of the

2   host population regarding migrants' acculturation and the role motivational climate

3   play in promoting integration.

4   *Keywords*: multiculturalism, social integration, motivational climate, receiving

5   culture, migrants

6

1 **Empowering youth sport and acculturation: Examining the hosts' perspective in**

2 **Greek adolescents**

3   Within the field of sport psychology there has been a growing interest in the

4 social mission of sport (Schinke & Hanrahan, 2012). This mission has been described

5 as processes and actions aiming at improving the lives of individuals and groups in

6 relation to various contexts, such as health and well-being, youth development, and

7 intercultural exchange (Schinke, Stambulova, Lidor, Papaioannou & Ryba, 2015).

8 Within this area, an important focus has been placed on the socio-cultural aspects of

9 sport and specifically on acculturation processes. The development of cultural

10 competencies is among the priorities identified by the International Society of Sport

11 Psychology (ISSP Position Stand; Ryba, Stambulova, Si & Schinke, 2016) and it is

12 recommended that sport and exercise psychology professionals focus more on cultural

13 awareness (ISSP Position Stand: Ryba, Schinke, Stambulova & Elbe, 2017).

14   The recent cultural sport psychology literature has mainly focused on two

15 different research perspectives. One perspective spotlights the experiences of (elite)

16 athletes who migrate to pursue or develop their sport career. Studies have, for

17 example, highlighted the athletes' experiences in the acculturation process like upsets,

18 problems, their coping strategies and the adaptations that take place (Blodgett &

19 Schinke, 2015; Ryba, Ronkainen & Selänne, 2015; Schinke, Blodgett, McGannon, &

20 Ge, 2016). This literature has also been recently accommodated within a new

21 framework, the cultural praxis of athletes' careers (Stambulova & Ryba, 2014). These

22 studies, which predominantly apply a qualitative methodology, have promoted the

23 study of athletes as multidimensional identities within and outside the athletic context,

24 but also address the influence of the receiving culture on migrating athletes'

25 development. A second line of research places more focus on the sport context rather

1   than the individual athlete and investigates the role of sport as an acculturation agent

2   within a sport for all rather than a competitive sport context. This second perspective

3   explores the potential of sport as a context wherein effective acculturation can take

4   place, and examines the dynamics of cultural interaction within sport for the

5   promotion of social integration (e.g., Allen, Drane, Byon & Mohn, 2010; Stodolska &

6   Alexandris, 2004). Although the two perspectives have different foci they share ideas

7   and grounds surrounding the understanding that acculturation is a dynamic process

8   reflecting cultural and psychological change following intercultural contact (Redfield,

9   Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). In addition, both perspectives share the common

10   assumption that the interaction between migrating and host individuals is of great

11   importance in order to understand the acculturation process. The present investigation

12   adopts the acculturative role of sport perspective and focuses on the sport context

13   rather than the individual athlete. This focus allows us to address the sport context as

14   a means for acculturation which has been identified as an issue of particular

15   importance for the functioning of contemporary societies.

16   The process of acculturation, has always been considered to be of fundamental

17   importance for both intergroup relations and migrants' adaptation to the society of

18   settlement, and has attracted significant research attention (see special issues by Berry

19   & Sam, 2013; Leong & Liu, 2013; Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). The

20   potential of sport to contribute positively to a range of social issues is widely

21   acknowledged (Bloyce & Smith; 2010; Schinke & Hanrahan, 2012), and this has

22   generated a growing policy interest to encourage the use of sport as a vehicle to

23   promote social integration and intercultural dialogue (Schinke et al., 2015).

24   Nevertheless, a review of the relevant literature (Hatzigeorgiadis, Morela, Elbe, Kouli,

25   & Sanchez, 2013) has revealed contradictory findings. On the one hand, research has

1   identified potential benefits of sport participation for minority groups, such as cultural

2   adaptation and effective coping with acculturation stress (Stack & Iwasaki, 2009), and

3   the development of social networks with host majority members (Guerin, Diiriye,

4   Corrigan, Guerin, 2003). On the other hand, it has been argued that sport may be a

5   field in which discrimination may evolve (Doherty & Taylor, 2007; Schinke et al.,

6   2015), and that the potential bridging effect of sport is almost fully countered by the

7   tensions arising from outside sport (Krouwel, Boostra, Duyvendak, & Veldboer,

8   2006). Hatzigeorgiadis and colleagues' (2013) review concluded that sport

9   participation per se may not be sufficient to facilitate fruitful acculturation and that

10 research should explore the features of the sport environment that may help towards

11 reaching the goals of integration. In addition, the review identified that only a small

12 number of studies were based on solid theoretical frameworks, stressing the need for

13 theoretically driven research (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013).

14 **Theoretical framework and relevant research**

15   Berry's (1997; Berry & Sam, 2013) acculturation model provides a suitable

16 framework for the study of migrants' acculturation. The model suggests that there are

17 two independent dimensions underlying the acculturation process, based on the

18 distinction between orientations towards one's own group and those towards other

19 groups. These are cultural maintenance, and cultural contact and participation.

20 Cultural maintenance refers to the conservation of one's ethnic heritage and cultural

21 traditions, while cultural contact and participation refer to the interaction and

22 exchange of experiences between members of different ethnic and cultural

23 backgrounds.

24   The prevalence of these orientations determines the strategies that members of

25 both the migrant and the host populations adopt (Berry, 2008). Among the migrant

1   groups, these preferences are described as acculturation strategies, and have been

2   identified as *integration,* reflecting high orientations towards both maintenance and

3   contact (identification with both cultures); *assimilation*, reflecting high orientations

4   towards cultural contact and low towards cultural maintenance, (identification mostly

5   with the host culture); *separation*, reflecting high orientation towards cultural

6   maintenance and low orientations towards cultural contact (identification mostly with

7   one's own heritage culture); and *marginalization*, reflecting low orientations for both

8   cultural maintenance and contact (low identification with both cultures). Among the

9   members of the host society the preferences are described as acculturation

10 expectations and have been respectively identified as multiculturalism, in which

11 cultural diversity maintenance and equitable participation are an accepted feature of

12 the host community society (corresponding with integration); melting pot, in which

13 host members are resistant to migrants' cultural maintenance and wish for their

14 absorption in the host community (corresponding with assimilation); segregation,

15 when host members accept migrants' cultural maintenance but at the same time feel

16 that interaction should be avoided (corresponding with separation); and exclusion,

17 when host members deny migrants' cultural maintenance as well as their integration

18 into the host society (corresponding with marginalization) (Berry, 2010).The

19 bidimensional model of acculturation was further extended by Bourhis, Moise,

20 Perreault and Senecal, (1997) who highlighted the importance of the fit between the

21 goals of the two populations, and suggested that acculturation orientations of the host

22 population can influence the orientations adopted by migrants (Bourhis, Montreuil,

23 Barrette, & Montaruli, 2009). Bourhis et al. (1997) described the interactive

24 acculturative model, which emphasizes the role of the host majority members'

25 expected acculturation orientations towards migrant groups.

1 **The role of the sporting environment**

2   Adopting the framework developed by Berry, two studies have explored

3 aspects of the sport environment in relation to ethnic and cultural identity in migrants.

4 In these studies ethnic identity was conceptualized as a composite of preferences

5 migrants hold to preserve their ethnicity, whereas cultural identity refers to their

6 preference to be involved with the larger society (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000). Morela,

7 Hatzigeorgiadis, Kouli, Elbe and Sanchez (2013) investigated young migrant athletes

8 in Greece, who participated in sport teams comprising mostly members of the host

9 culture. They found that team cohesion could negatively predict feelings of fringe and

10 lack of interaction with members of the host culture. A similar study by Elbe et al.

11 (2016) found that the motivational climate and particularly mastery climate and

12 autonomy support were linked to an adaptive integrative profile in male adolescent

13 migrants.

14   With regard to the motivational climate, there is considerable evidence that the

15 climate created by the coach can facilitate socially desirable outcomes. From an

16 achievement goal perspective, a mastery climate, i.e., a climate fostering learning,

17 promoting cooperation, and focusing on effort and personal improvement has been

18 linked to prosocial attitudes and behavior. In contrast, a performance climate, i.e., a

19 climate fostering superiority over others and focusing on outcomes and normative

20 criteria of success, has been linked to antisocial attitudes and behavior (Kavussanu,

21 2006; Miller, Roberts, & Ommundsen 2004). In addition, from a self-determination

22 perspective, autonomous motivation has been shown to be positively linked with

23 prosocial behaviors such as volunteering (Gagné, 2003) and helping others (Weinstein

24 & Ryan, 2010). Self-determined motivation is defined as being intrinsic and satisfying

25 the three basic psychological needs; the need for competence, i.e., a sense of mastery

1   through effective interaction within their environment; the need for autonomy, i.e.

2   perceptions of choice and an authentic sense of self-direction and volition; and the

3   need for relatedness, i.e., a sense of mutual caring and connectedness with others

4   (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Supporting evidence regarding the importance of the

5   motivational climate for the facilitation of acculturation has been provided by a study

6   conducted in the physical education context. Kouli and Papaioannou (2009) studied

7   ethnic and cultural identity in relation to achievement goals and motivational climate,

8   and found that sport activities taking place in physical education classes with mastery

9   climates were linked to integration and assimilation, whereas a performance climate

10   was linked to separation and marginalization.

11   Considering the motivational climate from a more global perspective, Duda

12   (2013) argued for the importance of integrating the tenets of achievement goal theory

13   (Nicholls, 1989) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and introduced

14   the terms empowering and disempowering motivational climate. An empowering

15   climate is described as having a mastery climate and being autonomy and socially-

16   supportive (Duda & Appleton, 2016). Such a climate is ideal for the satisfaction of the

17   three basic psychological needs as described by the self-determination framework

18   (Deci & Ryan, 2000). In contrast, disempowering coaching is described as a

19   performance oriented and controlling environment, perceived as coercive, pressuring,

20   and authoritarian that undermines athletes' psychological needs and sense of self-

21   determination.

22   Research has shown that empowering coaching is related to enjoyment and

23   quality of life variables such as subjective vitality, life satisfaction, self-esteem, and

24   health; whereas disempowering climate is related to anxiety and intention to drop out

25   (Papaioannou et al., 2013). More closely related to the purposes of this study,

1   Kolovelonis, Keramidas, Krommidas, and Goudas (2015) examined relationships

2   between motivational climate in elementary school physical education and aspects of

3   social competence. The results showed that an empowering motivational climate was

4   positively related to empathy and cooperating skills, whereas a disempowering

5   motivational climate was related to quick-temperedness and disruptiveness.

6   Considering the restricted relevant literature on the socially valued outcomes of the

7   sport environment, we expected that adopting the approach of combining the two

8   motivational theories would maximize the potential of the study of sport and

9   integration, and contribute to a better understanding of the factors contributing to

10   positive acculturation outcomes.

11   **The role of the host culture**

12   In addition to the need for theoretically driven research, and the examination

13   of the sport context factors that facilitate effective acculturation, a look into the

14   relevant literature within the sport for acculturation research area reveals that research

15   has largely focused on migrants, thus neglecting to a large degree the perspective of

16   the host population. The important role of the host population has been identified

17   within research on the acculturation of migrating athletes. Schinke and McGannon

18   (2014) argued that our understanding of the role of the social context within which

19   acculturation takes place is limited, and put forward the idea of shared acculturation

20   (Schinke, McGannon, Battochio, & Wells, 2013). The term shared acculturation

21   implies that acculturation is a two-way interaction and that both individuals from the

22   migrating and receiving culture should show interest in intercultural exchange and

23   thereby actively facilitate positive acculturation experiences. It is assumed that shared

24   acculturation which involves all partners in the acculturation process is more fruitful

25   than solely placing the burden on migrants for achieving a successful acculturation.

1   Within this approach two interactive processes were identified, namely the limited

2   reciprocity and the immersed reciprocity (Schinke & McGannon, 2014). The limited

3   reciprocity refers to the provision of encouragement and support from members of the

4   host culture, such as the coach and teammates, to help migrants understand the host

5   culture and assimilate, without however considering the person's cultural identity and

6   heritage. In contrast, immersed reciprocity refers to a mutual understanding, from

7   hosts and migrants, of the responsibilities involved in the acculturation process,

8   accepting that sport contexts are culturally diverse, and attempting to learn,

9   understand, and share each other's cultural values. The adoption of such processes

10   provides the greatest potential for social integration.

11   Two studies that have partly involved members of the host culture seem to

12   confirm the ambiguity of the findings. Krouwel et al. (2006) reported that sport

13   participants from The Netherlands were interested in the social dimension of sport

14   participation, including the contact with people from other cultural groups; however,

15   they also desired to distinguish themselves from other groups. In addition, the authors

16   argued that competitions between homogeneous teams of different origins (teams

17   consisting exclusively of athletes from the host culture versus teams consisting

18   exclusively of migrant athletes) may evoke tension and result in incidents of violence.

19   Muller, Van Zoonen and DeRoode (2008) on the occasion of a multicultural football

20   tournament for migrants, which aimed at enhancing cultural interaction in The

21   Netherlands, collected data from several sources. Among members of the host

22   population, the organizers of the tournament viewed the tournament as a means to

23   enhance contact, mutual understanding and respect across cultures; and spectators

24   reported that they attended the tournament to socialize with friends, but also to

25   interact and enjoy other cultures. In summary, research on the role of hosts regarding

1 migrants' acculturation within the sport context is limited, and the findings are

2 ambiguous.

3 **The cultural context of this study**

4   Our study was conducted in a specific cultural context, namely the Greek one.

5 Greece has recently received a large number of migrants and today, more than 10% of

6 the students enrolled in Greek public schools are of immigrant origin (Motti-Stefanidi,

7 Masten, & Asendorpf, 2015). The legislative framework of Greek educational policy

8 guarantees schooling for all children, citizen or foreign (regardless of the legal status

9 of residence) from the age of 6 to the age of 15. To meet the increasing schooling

10 needs of migrants, the Greek authorities established intercultural schools aiming at

11 providing an educational platform for contact between native and migrant students.

12 These schools, in addition to the typical curriculum, offer to migrant students Greek

13 language support courses, but also courses on the language of their country of origin.

14 Thus, migrant children in Greece can choose to either join general schools (mostly

15 comprising native students), or intercultural schools (mostly comprising migrant

16 students). Intercultural schools in Greece have been strongly criticized for being

17 unable to manage diversity proactively and for marginalizing foreign students

18 (Damanakis, 2005), as the vast majority of these schools have turned into migrant

19 schools. The reasons for this is that Greek parents refrain from sending their children

20 to these schools because they are afraid that the cultural and linguistic identity of the

21 students will negatively affect the level of their children's learning (Paroutsas, 2013).

22 Nevertheless, research has shown that students who coexist in the classroom with

23 foreign students show greater respect and acceptance of differences compared to

24 students who do not mix with children from other cultures (Damico & Sparks, 1986).

25 This reinforces the view of the positive influence of intercultural contact (Unicef,

1 2001). Data for this study were collected from typical high schools in Greece

2 (intercultural schools were excluded from the study) with an average of 14.6%

3 migrant students, which is representative of the Greek school population. The

4 majority of the migrant students in these schools were from Albania and the former

5 USSR countries, which are the largest groups of migrants in Greece (Aspridis &

6 Petrelli, 2011).

7 Intercultural contact influences both minority groups and host community

8 members and sport teams may offer a suitable context for developing cultural

9 interaction and promoting intergroup relations in culturally diverse societies

10 (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2013). Previous research has shown that in some cases

11 migrants have opportunities to choose to either take part in sport activities with the

12 people from the host culture, attempting to enhance interaction with the mainstream

13 population, or to participate in sports with individuals coming from the same ethnic

14 and cultural background, attempting to strengthen their ethnic identity (Stodolska &

15 Alexandris, 2004). However, in Greece migrants who wish to participate in organized

16 sport have to join sport teams where the vast majority of athletes are native Greeks,

17 since pure ethnic sport teams do not exist (Elbe et al., 2016), thus maximizing the

18 opportunities for cultural interaction with the host population. However, this reduces

19 the chances that sport can be a field for strengthening their ethnic identity, since it is

20 not likely to socialize with members of their own culture, which is equally important

21 for achieving integration.

22 **Objectives and hypotheses**

23 Regardless of its political and social significance, research-based evidence on

24 the social-facilitating role of sport, in particular with regard to acculturation, has not

25 received the required attention. In addition, research has almost exclusively focused

1 on the migrants' perspectives, thus disregarding the important role of the host society

2 in the acculturation process. Based on the conceptualization of Berry's (1997)

3 acculturation model and taking into consideration the emphasis placed on the role of

4 the host population by Bourhis et al.'s (1997) interactive acculturation model, the

5 present study aimed at investigating the hosts' perspective regarding migrant's

6 acculturation in relation to sport participation and the sport motivational climate.

7 Summarizing the above, the purpose of the present study was to (a) explore

8 acculturation attitudes and perceptions of adolescents from the host population as a

9 function of sport participation, by comparing adolescent athletes with non-athletes,

10 and (b) investigate the role of the motivational climate, within those participating in

11 sport. For the first research objective, given the existing inconsistent findings, no

12 hypotheses were formulated. For the second research objective, a mastery climate and

13 the satisfaction of basic needs in sport were hypothesized to form an empowering

14 motivational climate that would relate positively to acculturation attitudes reflecting

15 multiculturalism, whereas a performance climate and controlling coaching behavior

16 were hypothesized to form a disempowering motivational climate that would relate

17 negatively to acculturation attitudes reflecting multiculturalism.

18 **Method**

19 **Research Design**

20 This was a cross-sectional, quantitative study, assessing young Greek high

21 school students' attitudes towards migrants as a function of sport participation.

22 **Participants and Procedures**

23 Participants were 626 (13.88±1.01 years of age) native Greek high school

24 students (316 girls), who were living either in Thessaloniki (a large city in Northern

25 Greece, n = 136) or Trikala (n = 490; a medium size city in Central Greece).

1 Regarding family income, 42.5% reported low income (up to 1000 euros), 46.6%

2 moderate income (between 1000 and 2000 euros), and 10.9% moderate to high

3 income (more than 2000 euros). Regarding parental education, 22% of students had

4 fathers who completed primary education, 40.5% secondary education, and 37.5%

5 higher education. In addition, 12.5% of the students had mothers who completed

6 primary education, 42.7% secondary education, and 44.8% higher education. Among

7 all the participants, 271 (92 girls) were athletes competing in either team (n = 175) or

8 individual sports (n = 96). The average length of sport participation was 4.13 (±2.42)

9 years and the average length of participation in the current club was 3.38 (±2.34)

10 years.

11 The study was approved by the Institution's Ethics Committee and the

12 Ministry of Education. Permission was granted from the local education authorities,

13 which also informed the schools regarding this research. The school principals were

14 then contacted by the researchers, agreed to their school's participation, and informed

15 the teachers. During a first visit a group meeting took place where the principal and

16 the teachers were informed about the procedures and were asked to distribute and

17 collect the consent forms addressed to parents. In a second visit arranged after the

18 consent forms were collected, students completed anonymous questionnaires in their

19 classes in the presence of a researcher who provided explanations if required. The

20 questionnaires were numbered and participants were instructed to complete the parts

21 of the questionnaires that corresponded to their athletic status. Completion of the

22 questionnaires took approximately 20 min.

23 **Instruments**

24 **Hosts' attitudes and perceptions.** All participants completed the Host

25 Community Acculturation Scale (HCAS; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001) which

1   comprises 12 items assessing two dimensions of in-group attitudes (cultural

2   maintenance and cultural contact) and two dimensions of out-group perceptions

3   (cultural maintenance and cultural contact). In-group attitudes reflect personal

4   attitudes towards migrants maintaining their culture (3 items; e.g., "I don't mind

5   migrants maintaining their own way of living"), and interacting with the host

6   population (3 items; e.g., "I think it is important that migrants have Greek friends").

7   Out-group perceptions reflect perceptions regarding migrants' desire to maintaining

8   their culture (3 items; e.g., "I think migrants wish to maintain their culture"), and

9   interacting with the host population (3 items; e.g., "I think migrants wish to have

10 Greek friends). Responses were given on a 5-point scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 5

11 (totally agree). Hatzigeorgiadis, Morela, Sanchez, and Elbe (2014) provided sufficient

12 support for the psychometric integrity of the Greek version of the HCAS in

13 adolescents through evidence of factorial validity and reliability.

14 **Motivational climate.** Actively competing athletes ($n = 271$) completed

15 additional instruments assessing the team motivational climate, in particular, the

16 Perceptions of Coach's Emphasis on Goal Orientations questionnaire (Papaioannou,

17 Ampatzoglou, Kalogiannis, & Sagovits, 2008), the Basic Need Satisfaction in Sport

18 Scale (Ng, Lonsdale & Hodge, 2011), and the Controlling Coach Behaviours Scale

19 (Bartholomew Ntoumanis, & Thogersen-Ntoumani, 2010).

20 The *Perceptions of Coach's Emphasis on Goal Orientations* questionnaire

21 (PCEGO; Papaioannou, et al., 2008) was used to assess mastery climate (4 items; e.g.

22 "The coach pays particular attention whether I improve myself in the training"),

23 performance approach climate (4 items; e.g. "The coach insists that we should

24 compete to prove that we are better than the others"), and performance avoidance

25 climate (4 items; e.g. "The coach often makes me worry about how others see my

1 sporting abilities"). Responses were given on a 5-point scale from 1 (totally disagree)

2 to 5 (totally agree).

3   The *Basic Need Satisfaction in Sport Scale* (BNSSS; Ng, Lonsdale & Hodge,

4 2011) was used to assess the satisfaction of participants concerning the psychological

5 needs of competence (7 items; e.g. "I can overcome challenges in my sport"),

6 relatedness (8 items; e.g. "In my sport, I feel close to other people"), and autonomy as

7 reflected in choice (5 items; e.g. "In my sport, I get opportunities to make choices"),

8 internal perceived locus of causality (4 items; e.g. "In my sport, I feel I am pursuing

9 goals that are my own") and volition (5 items; e.g. "I feel I participate in my sport

10 willingly"). Responses were given on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (not true at all) to

11 7 (very true).

12   The *Controlling Coach Behaviors Scale* (CCBS; Bartholomew et al., 2010)

13 was used to assess athletes' perceptions of four controlling motivational strategies in

14 sport domain. The questionnaire comprises four subscales: controlling use of rewards

15 (4 items; e.g. "My coach tries to motivate me by promising to reward me if I do

16 well"); negative conditional regard (4 items; e.g., "My coach is less friendly with me

17 if I don't make the effort to see things his/her way"); intimidation (4 items; e.g., "My

18 coach shouts at me in front of others to make me do certain things"); and excessive

19 personal control (3 items; e.g., "My coach tries to control what I do during my free

20 time"). Responses were given on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (not true at all) to 7

21 (very true).

22 **Data Analyses**

23   Confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the factorial validity for all

24 psychometric instruments. In addition, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed

25 to estimate internal consistency. Analysis of variance was conducted to test for

1 differences in attitudes towards acculturation as a function of athletic status, sport type

2 and competition level; whereas correlations were calculated to identify relationships

3 with age, years of sport experience, years in the current team, and percentage of non-

4 Greek players on the team. Finally, a structural equation path model was tested to

5 investigate the degree to which an empowering and disempowering motivational

6 climate could predict attitudes towards multiculturalism.

<div align="center">Results</div>

8   Confirmatory factor analysis testing the integrity of the factor structure for all

9 psychometric instruments yielded satisfactory results. In particular, the CFI and

10 RMSEA indices were as follows: for HCAS .963 and .055, for PCEGO .942 and .056,

11 for BNSS .938 and .045, and for CCBS .938 and .055. Analyses of internal

12 consistency also supported the reliability of the scales. For most scales Cronbach's

13 alpha values were satisfactory (above.70), and for three of the scales they were above

14 .65 which is considered acceptable (DeVellis, 1991). The Cronbach's alpha

15 coefficients are presented in Table 1.

16   Descriptive statistics and correlations for all psychometric variables are

17 presented in Table 1. Participants scored moderately on the dimensions of the Host

18 Community Acculturation Scale. Athletes scored relatively high on mastery climate,

19 moderately on performance approach, and moderately to low on performance

20 avoidance climate. They also scored moderately to moderately high on need

21 satisfaction, and moderately low for controlling coaching behavior.

22 **Acculturation attitudes as a function of sport participation**

23   A MANOVA was conducted to test for differences in the dimensions of host

24 community acculturation attitudes as a function of athletic status. A number of

25 demographic and socio-economic variables that could potentially influence the

1 dependent measures were included in the analysis as independent factors: sex, family

2 income, parents' education, and size of city. The analysis revealed a significant

3 multivariate effect for athletic status, $F(4, 407) = 2.40$, $p<.01$, partial $\eta^2=.03$.

4 Examination of the univariate statistics revealed that (a) athletic status had a

5 significant effect on attitudes towards migrants' contact with the host community, F

6 $(1, 419) = 6.66$, $p<.05$, partial $\eta^2=.02$, with athletes scoring higher than non-athletes.

7 No significant differences were found for attitudes towards migrants' cultural

8 maintenance, $F(1, 419) = 0.01$, $p=.98$, perceptions regarding migrants' attitudes

9 towards cultural maintenance, $F(1, 419) = 0.43$, $p=.51$, and perceptions regarding

10 migrants' attitudes towards contact with the host community, $F(1, 419) = 1.43$,

11 $p=.23$. The mean scores are presented in Table 2.

12   To control for the potential effect of differences related to participants' sport

13 involvement a number of sport variables was considered. Correlations were calculated

14 to test the relationships between acculturation attitudes and athletes' characteristics:

15 age, years of sport experience, years in the current team, and percentage of non-Greek

16 players on the team. The analysis revealed low and non-significant relationships (r

17 ranging from -.09 to .11).

18   A two-way MANOVA was conducted to test for differences in the dimensions

19 of host community acculturation as a function of sport-type and competitive level.

20 The analysis revealed a non-significant multivariate effect for sport-type, $F(4, 209) =$

21 1.54, $p=.19$ and level, $F(8, 420) = .65$, $p=.73$ and a non-significant sport-type by level

22 interaction, $F(8, 420) = 1.34$, $p=.22$. The mean scores for the different groups are

23 presented in Table 2.

24 **Acculturation attitudes and motivational climate**

1 A structural equation path model was tested to investigate the degree to which

2 an empowering and disempowering motivational climate could predict host

3 community acculturation attitudes. Composite factors were used to represent the

4 different subscales. Mastery climate, supportive of competence, relatedness, and

5 autonomy formed a latent factor for empowering motivational climate. Performance

6 approach and performance avoidance climate, along with controlling coaching

7 behavior formed a latent factor for disempowering motivational climate. Finally, in-

8 group attitudes towards cultural maintenance, in-group attitudes towards contact, out-

9 group attitudes towards cultural maintenance, and out-group attitudes towards contact,

10 formed a latent factor for the host community acculturation attitudes. The two latent

11 motivational climate factors were hypothesized to predict acculturation attitudes. The

12 analysis revealed a good fit for the hypothesized model (CFI = .92, RMSEA = .06). A

13 positive significant path was revealed between empowering motivational climate and

14 acculturation attitudes, whereas a negative significant path was revealed between

15 disempowering motivational climate and acculturation attitudes. The model predicted

16 9% of the acculturation attitudes variance. The structural model is presented in Figure

17 1.

18 **Discussion**

19 The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the role of sport for the

20 acculturation process and, particularly, the perspective of the host population

21 regarding migrants' acculturation. To that end, the attitudes and perceptions of the

22 host population as a function of sport participation were explored. In addition, for

23 those participating in sport, the role of the motivational climate in relation to

24 acculturation attitudes was investigated. Overall, our findings suggest that

25 participation in organized sport may be linked to attitudes favoring an adaptive

1 acculturation attitude, but this also depends on the climate wherein the activities take

2 place. These results can contribute to the discussion about social missions through

3 sport, in particular with regard to cultural competencies (Ryba et al., 2016; Ryba et

4 al., 2017).

5   The results showed that adolescents participating in sport scored higher than

6 those not participating on in-group contact, thus showing more accepting attitudes for

7 the development of interaction between migrant and host populations. Previous

8 research regarding intercultural relations between Greek students and students with a

9 migrant background revealed that Greek students' attitudes towards migrants were

10 negatively biased (Dimakos, Spinthourakis, & Tasiopoulou, 2011). Contact among

11 members of different cultural groups may reduce negative intergroup attitudes and

12 enhance mutual acceptance (Amir, 1969) especially when pursuing common goals

13 (Brown, Vivian, & Hewstone, 1999). Sport, a field that provides both contact with

14 and the pursuit of shared goals, seems to offer a context for fruitful contact, thus

15 supporting Niessen's (2000) suggestions that sport is suitable for reinforcing the

16 respect for cultural diversity and overcoming existing prejudices. Sport is also a

17 context in which cooperation and competition take place. Cooperation within a team

18 and the feeling of unity when pursuing common goals may enhance the understanding

19 of similarities between people from different cultures. Morela et al. (2013) in a sample

20 of young migrant athletes reported that perceptions of team cohesion were related to

21 integrative strategies. Engaging in competition teaches important values that

22 youngsters can benefit from when the emphasis is not placed on winning but on the

23 enjoyment of the competition (Hellandsig, 1998) and on striving for achievement with

24 respect for the sport and the people (Shields & Bredemeier, 2009). In such a context,

25 competition may teach participants that cultural characteristics do not really matter in

1 attaining one's, or a team's, goal, thus fostering the development of links within, but

2 also outside, the sport context. Developing positive attitudes towards migrants is

3 significant because it facilitates interaction, but also because migrants will seek

4 interaction more comfortably when they perceive that hosts are open for such

5 interaction. Yet, as identified in the introduction, sport that includes cooperation and

6 the enjoyment of competition, *may* lead to desirable outcomes when the environment

7 is appropriate.

8 Importantly, valuable findings emerged regarding the structure of the sport

9 motivational climate. An empowering motivational climate, characterized by a

10 mastery climate, supportive of autonomy, competence and relatedness, was positively

11 linked to what is described by Berry (2010) as multiculturalism attitudes, favoring

12 cultural maintenance and cultural contact between migrant and host populations from

13 the host perspective. In contrast, a disempowering climate characterized by a

14 performance climate and controlling coaching behavior was negatively related to

15 multiculturalism attitudes. The results coincide with previous findings conducted with

16 migrant populations that identified links between factors of the sport climate, and in

17 particular mastery climate and autonomy supportive coaching, and ethnic-cultural

18 identity in young migrant athletes (Elbe et al., 2016). Papaioannou, Zourbanos,

19 Krommidas and Ampatzoglou (2012) argued for the beneficial influence of a mastery

20 motivational climate for both the individuals and society. Previous research has

21 revealed positive links between a motivational climate and socio-moral attitudes

22 within (Kavussanu, 2006; Miller et al., 2004) and outside (Weinstein & Ryan, 2010)

23 sport. A sport climate that places emphasis on learning and improvement, thus

24 promoting a more controllable sense of competence, provides options and decision

25 making roles to support autonomy, and encourages fruitful cooperation and

1   meaningful interpersonal relationships, enhances the quality of the sport experience

2   and may help develop socially constructive attitudes, including multiculturalism. In

3   contrast, an climate fostering social comparisons and placing emphasis on outcomes

4   (e.g. winning), accompanied by a controlling interpersonal coaching style, may

5   overemphasize rivalry and values related to status (Lee, Whitehead, Ntoumanis, &

6   Hatzigeorgiadis, 2008), thus introducing conflict and undermining socially facilitating

7   outcomes.

8   The important role of the sport environment has also been investigated with

9   regard to the acculturation of transnational athletes and applying qualitative

10   methodology (Schinke, McGannon, Battochio, & Wells, 2013; Ryba, Haapanen,

11   Mosek, & Ng, 2012). Ryba, Stambulova and Ronkainen (2016) outlined the ways in

12   which the psychological responses to cultural transition are embedded within

13   relational contexts in the sport environment. Their study acknowledged the

14   importance of the coach in creating a caring environment that helped the athlete's

15   cultural adaptation through learning and co-construction of shared experiences and

16   norms. It also highlighted the teammates' importance for making the athlete feel

17   secure. These findings are in line with the associations identified in the present study

18   between an empowering climate, characterized by mastery orientations and supportive

19   of the need for relatedness, and acculturation attitudes.

20   There are two limitations that need to be addressed with regard to this study.

21   First, it has to be acknowledged that the magnitude of the prediction was relatively

22   low, as only 9% of the multiculturalism variance was explained; however, its practical

23   significance may be important. Considering that an abundance of economic, social,

24   and geographical dynamics may influence acculturation attitudes, even a small effect

25   arising within the universally widespread sport context can be a useful starting point

1   for the development of targeted actions and policies aiming at utilizing sport for the

2   achievement of socially crucial goals, particularly in culturally diverse and conflictual

3   contemporary societies. Second, it should be stressed that the study adopted a cross-

4   sectional design which cannot support causal inferences.

5   **Future directions and implications**

6   Research to increase the strength of the predictions identified in the present

7   investigation is warranted, as our model predicted only a limited amount of

8   multiculturalism attitudes. Such research would enhance our confidence about the

9   meaningful role that sport plays towards migrants' integration. In line with the

10   abovementioned limitation of the study's cross-sectional design, longitudinal,

11   evidence-based research investigating youth sport interventions which provide the

12   chance for multicultural contact in the sport arena, within a climate promoting

13   mastery orientations, and satisfying individuals' basic psychological needs, are

14   warranted. A further line of research should investigate why an empowering climate

15   may lead to socially valued acculturation outcomes. Brunelle, Danish and Forneris

16   (2007) reported that participation in a sport-based community service program

17   enhanced adolescents' levels of empathic concern and social responsibility. Moreover,

18   Kolovelonis et al. (2015) found positive relationships between empowering climate,

19   empathy and cooperating skills. Sport in an empowering climate may be linked to the

20   development of such skills, which may in turn relate to multiculturalism attitudes.

21   The findings yield useful insights on the perspective of the host population

22   regarding migrants' acculturation and the role of sporting environments in relation to

23   multiculturalism. The climate of the sport experience is shaped primarily by the

24   coach. An empowering motivational climate that emphasizes skill development and

25   cooperation, where the athletes' basic needs for autonomy, competence and

1 relatedness are met, could enhance positive interactions across individuals of different

2 ethnic origin and could facilitate the adoption of positive attitudes towards

3 acculturation. On the contrary, a performance oriented motivational climate, based on

4 comparative standards, emphasizing superiority, combined with a controlling

5 interpersonal coaching style seems detrimental for the promotion of acceptance and

6 mutual understanding regarding the goals of effective acculturation. Coaches can be

7 educated and trained in creating appropriate climates through programs such as

8 Empowering Coaching (Duda & Appleton, 2016) developed through the Promoting

9 Adolescents Physical Activity project (Duda, 2013), thus maximizing the potential of

10 sport as an integrative agent.

11 Finally, based on the above propositions and in relation to the particular

12 cultural context of the study some suggestions are worth mentioning. The Greek

13 context shows a lack of ethnic clubs which is not the case in other countries like

14 Spain, for example (Elbe et al., 2016). Ethnic clubs are sometimes more attractive for

15 migrants because they offer opportunities to strengthen their ethnic identity and

16 because migrants sometimes feel more comfortable in such clubs. This lack of ethnic

17 clubs in Greece means that those migrants who want to participate in sport have to

18 join sport teams dominated by members of the host culture; this could mean that some

19 migrants choose not to participate in sports at all. A suggestion therefore could be to

20 increase the availability of attractive sport environments where migrant adolescents

21 would choose and desire to participate in. These sport environments, however, would

22 also need to be attractive for members of the host culture so that they could offer

23 opportunities for intercultural contact. Educating sport organizations and sport policy

24 makers on which kind of sport environments facilitate positive acculturation could

25 ensure that the goals for acculturation are reached. This education and the following

1   implementation would also benefit coaches and athletes. Placing an emphasis on an

2   empowering climate, for example, is ideal for the promotion of socio-moral values,

3   such as cooperation, fair-play, empathy, altruism, understanding, and acceptance of

4   differences (Gagné, 2003; Weinstein & Ryan, 2010), and in line with the ISSP

5   statements for considering and developing cultural competence within sport context

6   (Ryba, et al., 2013). Moreover, the promotion of in-club and out-of-club social

7   activities with cultural content where adolescents could satisfy their needs for

8   autonomy and relatedness would further assist the development of links favoring the

9   goals of shared acculturation (Ryba, 2009; Schinke et al., 2013). Finally, a

10 challenging suggestion could be made in relation to the Greek context and the

11 seemingly failure of intercultural schools to reach the objectives of acculturation

12 through contact. Installing physical activity centers in these schools could eventually

13 enhance their attractiveness and the possibilities for contact. Even if parents from the

14 host society do not wish to send their children to such schools during the day, after

15 school recreational sport activities open for both migrants and members of the host

16 society , within an empowering climate fostering life-skills (Kolovelonis, et al., 2015),

17 would provide a suitable platform for interaction between different groups.

18 **Conclusion**

19   The present study is to our knowledge the first quantitative study focusing on

20 the role of the host population regarding migrant's integration within the literature

21 examining the potential of sport as an agent for acculturation. The findings suggest

22 that sport is a suitable context to promote positive acculturation and that an

23 empowering motivational climate that emphasizes skill development and cooperation,

24 where the athletes' basic needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness are met,

25 could facilitate positive attitudes towards acculturation in members of the host culture

1 This evidence encourages further research exploring additional sport attributes that

2 can positively impact this important social encounter and promote the social mission

3 of sport. Furthermore, this study lays the foundation for educating coaches, sport

4 organizations and sport policy makers on which sport environmental factors are

5 decisive when wanting to use sport as a tool to promote integration of migrants.

6

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Table 1

Descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha coefficients, and correlations.

	Descriptive statistics		Cronbach's alpha	Correlations			
	M	S.D.		1	2	3	4
Host Community Acculturation Scale							
1. In-group cultural maintenance	3.57	1.06	.88				
2. In-group contact	3.22	0.57	.67				
3. Out-group cultural maintenance	3.61	0.82	.84				
4. Out-group contact	3.54	0.77	.67				
Motivational climate	3.24	0.60					
Mastery	4.18	0.73	.74	.14*	.10	.22**	.20**
Performance approach	2.90	1.00	.77	-.18**	.04	-.01	-.05
Performance avoidance	2.24	0.96	.81	-.09	-.03	-.00	-.13*
Need satisfaction							
Competence	5.73	1.04	.80	.03	.11	.15*	.02
Relatedness	5.74	1.16	.84	.11	.08	.16**	.13*
Autonomy – choice	4.69	1.48	.81	-.01	.04	.14*	-.01
Autonomy – locus of causality	5.92	1.20	.65	.17**	.04	.20**	.09
Autonomy – volition	6.10	1.21	.71	.14*	.11	.22**	.23**
Controlling coaching behaviour							
Use of rewards	2.98	1.60	.80	-.06	.03	-.04	-.02
Negative conditional regard	2.67	1.40	.73	-.17**	.04	-.07	-.12
Intimidation	2.38	1.45	.79	-.19**	-.04	-.08	-.10
Excessive personal control	2.74	1.57	.70	-.14*	-.03	-.08	-.05

Table 2

Mean scores for acculturation attitudes for the different groups.

	In-group		Outgroup	
	cultural maintenance	contact	cultural maintenance	Contact
Athletic status				
Athletes	3.55±1.08	3.27±0.56	3.60±0.83	3.54±0.82
Non-athletes	3.59±1.05	3.18±0.57	3.62±0.81	3.55±0.73
Sport type				
Individual sports	3.74±0.94	3.29±0.52	3.53±0.87	3.59±0.85
Team sports	3.51±1.12	3.27±0.58	3.66±0.80	3.55±0.78
Level				
Local	3.53±1.11	3.25±0.56	3.63±0.82	3.50±0.77
National	3.66±0.97	3.17±0.54	3.61±0.89	3.58±0.91

Figure 1. Path model describing the relationships between empowering/disempowering climate and acculturation attitudes and perceptions.
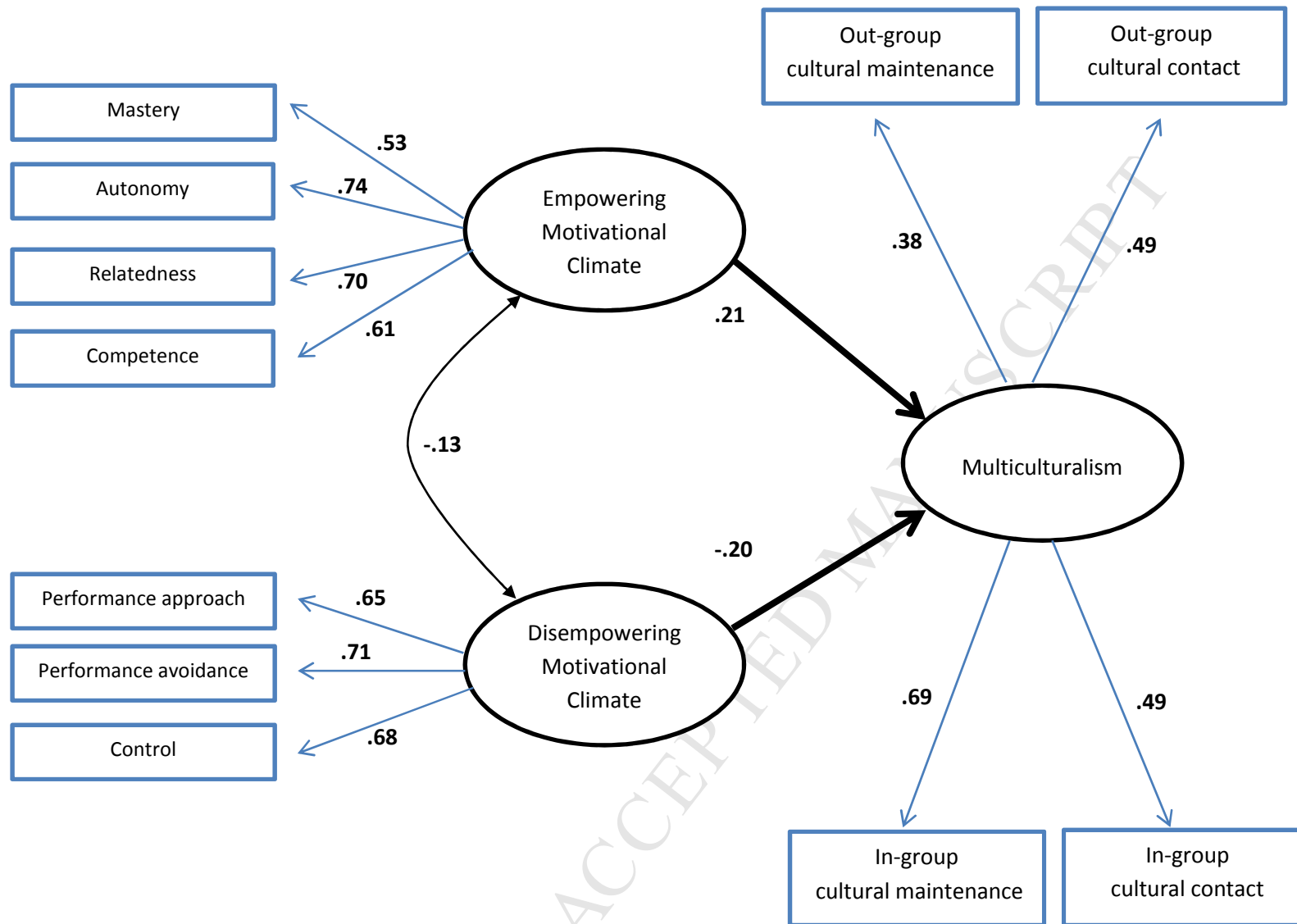
Highlights

- Athletes showed more accepting attitudes towards multicultural contact than non-athletes.

- Empowering athletic climate was positively linked to multiculturalism attitudes

- Disempowering athletic climate was negatively linked to multiculturalism attitudes

- Youth sports may induce desirable integration outcomes when the sport environment is appropriate